



January 4, 2005

TO: Board Members - Parks and Recreation
FROM: General Manager - Parks and Recreation
SUBJECT: 8th & Fraser Park Site Naming

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Board consider and approve one of the following names for the 8th and Fraser Park:

- *Sahalli Park*
- *Suffragette Park*

POLICY

**Guidelines for Naming Parks, Trails, Roads Or Other Features
Coming Under the Park Board's Jurisdiction**

1. In the first instance, the park, trail, road or other feature being named generally should relate to a "constant" feature either nearby or within that park. This could relate to a bordering street name or a natural or man-made feature. This does not preclude the consideration of a name already in "common" use for the park. Criteria such as the above gives ease of identification with relation to the park.
2. When no such "constant" feature is present or it is desired to commemorate an historical event or person important to the Park Board, City of Vancouver, or a person having made a substantial donation to the Park Board, a park may be named for that person.
3. When deemed appropriate, the Park Board will submit a short list of suggested names to concerned community groups for their input regarding the selection of a name.

BACKGROUND

The park site bounded by 8th and 7th Avenues at Fraser Street has been incrementally amalgamated from private and public properties over the past decade. At .6 hectares (1.48 acres), it comprises pathways, a picnic site, playground, viewing knoll, lawns, a community garden and a variety of trees and shrubs including an 80 year old specimen fir tree. The assembly of this

land, in one of Vancouver's most park deficient neighbourhoods, is a testament to one of the Board's fundamental guiding principles of providing access to adequate parkland within all the city's neighbourhoods. Purchase price for the parkland over the years totals about \$2 million, with park construction costs of about \$165,000. The park site's recent completion and the lack of a significant landmark or bordering street name prompted a community naming process.

As directed by the Board in a June 16, 2004 report, a name gathering process for the park was conducted within the community from mid-July to mid-September. A variety of promotional initiatives were prepared to attract public interest. During the week of July 19, 2004 park naming displays, including ballot boxes, were placed at a number of neighbourhood facilities, including Mount Pleasant Community Centre, the Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House, Kingsgate Mall, Broadway Youth Resource Centre and the Raven Song Community Health Centre. A 4 x 6 foot sign was erected on the park inviting the community to share their naming ideas; information flyers were distributed to residents and businesses in the vicinity of the park site; information and an on-line ballot were posted on the Park Board's web site; a press release was sent out, and the event was highlighted in a web site feature box. Advertisements were placed in the Vancouver Courier and in the Ming Pao newspaper the week of July 19, 2004.

The original submission deadline of August 20 was extended to September 15, 2004 in order to capture suggestions of residents who might have been on holiday over the summer months. A date for the official opening of the park will be set in spring 2005.

Submissions

In total, 197 name submissions were received. Staff collated all entries and short listed the nominations, eliminating those that were the same or similar to existing park names and amenities in Vancouver. Others were not recommended because they were not deemed appropriate. The remaining submissions were reviewed against the policy criteria with Vancouver Archives assisting in the historical research.

DISCUSSION

Staff is recommending two names for the Board's consideration following further input from the Board's Planning and Environment Committee, each falling within Park Board Guidelines for Naming Parks. Justification for the selected names is cited.

Sahalli Park (*sometimes spelled Sahali*)

Suggested by three members of the community during the recent naming process and previously in a 1995 letter from the Mount Pleasant Community Centre's Park Committee, this name is from the First Nations Chinook jargon language meaning "high ground", making it appropriate for the site. The Mount Pleasant Community Centre Association recently reaffirmed their earlier support for the name "Sahalli".

Additional research with the First Nations Language Centre at UBC and an internet language search gave these further definitions:

noun high tides: mountains; high land; heaven
adjective up; above; high.

Further research with local First Nations groups found that the word is not generally in use today but was “jargon” created out of necessity in dealing with early fur traders.

Suffragette Park

This name was suggested by the Brewery Creek Historical Society in 1994 when the first phase of this park was completed with respect to the crucial role played by the Mount Pleasant suffragettes in leading the voting rights movement for women in British Columbia. Successful efforts of the Mount Pleasant suffragettes influenced the struggle at a Provincial level.

Further research by City Archivist’s uncovered news reports and excerpts from a book clearly substantiating that the Mount Pleasant Suffrage League was instrumental, after years of protest and lobbying, in the passage of a province-wide referendum asking one simple question: “Do you believe in the extension of the electoral franchise to women?” The men of British Columbia, including absentee votes from the trenches of the Great War, overwhelmingly approved the right for women to vote by a greater majority than any American state had previously given. In fact, the men of BC were the first in the British Empire to give women suffrage by direct vote.

SUMMARY

The recent completion of the park site at 8th & Fraser makes it an appropriate time to officially name this greenspace. The recommended names fall within the parameters of the Park Board’s Guidelines for Naming Parks. Community participation was strong and a short list prepared by staff has been further considered by the Planning and Environment Committee. With approval of an official park name, a spring 2005 opening is anticipated.

Prepared by:
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